Author’s response to reviews

Title: Multimorbidity Patterns of and Use of Health Services by Swedish 85-year-olds: An Exploratory Study

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
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Ms Catherine Olino
BMC Geriatrics Editorial team

Dear Ms Catherine Olino!

MS: 2098248583926952
Multimorbidity Patterns of and Use of Health Services by Swedish 85 year olds: An Exploratory Study (Huan-Ji Dong, Ewa Wressle and Jan Marcusson)

We are very pleased to have this opportunity to resubmit a revised version of our paper. Many thanks again for your advice about the resubmission process.

On the following pages, a summary providing a point-by-point response to each comment is enclosed.

We highlighted (with 'tracked changes') all changes made in the new version (Word 2007).

We look forward to hearing from you regarding your comments and decision on this revised paper.

Yours sincerely,
Huan-Ji Dong
Response to Dave Kerby

We are very pleased to improve our work with your suggestions. Below are the point-to-point responses to the queries. Thank you for your guidance.

Minor Essential Revisions
1. There is one statement on page 12 that was in the original submission, but that for some reason I failed to address. In the following statement, the word it seems to be referring to cluster analysis: “However, it is still not an empirical method.” Gathering and analyzing data is indeed an empirical method, so the meaning here is not clear to me. I wonder if the authors mean to say that there are choices and thus limitations in cluster analysis. If so, then the situation is no different from other methods. In factor analysis, there are choices of extraction and rotation; in ANOVA, there are choices about post hoc tests; in regression analysis, there are choices about models to select – but these choices do not render the studies non-empirical. If the authors are trying to address the limitations of the study, they have done so adequately elsewhere. I suggest omitting this sentence or clarifying the meaning.

Response: We have deleted this sentence in the new version (in yellow colour). We agree that it can make the readers confused, since other statistical methods do have the same situation.

2. While the English is much improved over the first submission, there are still problems. The paper needs another polish of the language before it can be published. Below are some language problems that I particularly noticed:

Response in general: After a process of language polishing, we hope this new version has reached an acceptable level of English suitable for publishing.

a) On page four, this sentence is grammatically awkward and should be revised: “Therefore studies on multimorbidity may have to be explored in a more complex context, where for example influence of gender and cluster of diseases are considered.”

Response: deleted (in yellow colour).

b) On page five, the word also is not needed: “The process of sample collection is also described elsewhere [10].”

Response: deleted (in yellow colour).

c) Add a comma after the word status: “Working status measured by previous occupation, was classified into the following categories.”

Response: modified (in yellow colour).
d) On page nine, I suggest the phrase “explained more variance” rather than “improved more variance”: “Morbidity cluster (Model 2) and cluster interaction (Model 3) improved more variance than the single morbidity model (Model 1) (Table 5 and Table 6).”

Response: modified (in yellow colour).

e) On page eleven, I suggest the phrase “did not improve explained variance” rather than “did not improve variance”: “The slightly lower $R^2$ in the morbidity cluster models reveals that the selected morbidity cluster (men’s cardiac cluster and women’s cardiopulmonary cluster) did not improve variance.”

Response: modified (in yellow colour).

d) On page twelve, the word be should be omitted: “First, the choice of morbidities in the hierarchical cluster analysis was not be equal for men and women due to the different prevalence.”

Response: deleted (in yellow colour).